



Spirit of Life Lutheran Church

Jacksonville, FL
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Jacksonville, FL 32226
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January 2019

We spread the gospel through love, acceptance,
and giving of ourselves for Jesus.



In This Issue

- From the Pastor
- Financial Corner
- Fellowship & Outreach Teams
- Emergency Food Pantry
- Worship and Music
- Ruth Circle
- Prayer List
- Celebrations & Calendar

Web Site:

<http://spiritoflifejacksonville.org/>



Find Us on Facebook!

Called by God: Solve the Mystery!

Here's a quick quiz about people that God has called to follow him. Read the clues and see how you do.

- 1) Was God thinking clearly? I had been retired for decades, living on the family farm, except there was no family. When God called me to follow to a new country, my wife laughed at this crazy idea. But we packed up and followed God. Later on, we had a child as God promised!
- 2) The little town in Georgia, Tekoa Falls, is named after my hometown. I heard the call of God to go to a foreign country and tell them that their worship practices were pretentious and hollow. When I heard God call, I followed.
- 3) The song playing on my car radio when I experienced the call of God might have been "Blinded by the Light." My first sermon could have resulted in a personal injury lawsuit but didn't. After a slow start, I ended up supervising several churches, had my writings read in churches, and was arrested and imprisoned.
- 4) Lonely and afraid while walking in a storm, I threw myself in the mud during a lightning flash and promised to give my life to God. Later, I learned that following God was based on trust, not fear. This hard-earned wisdom changed the church for centuries to come.

OK, how did you do? 1) is Abraham (Genesis), 2) is Amos, 3) is St. Paul, and 4) is Martin Luther.

Spirit of Life (that's you) is getting very close to calling a new permanent pastor. Wonderful news! A good way to miss this blessing is to think that you are "hiring" someone to do a job for you. That puts the emphasis on how the clergy is performing according to human specifications. Guaranteed: congregations that do this always end up fighting and bitter. It's called being clergy focused. In the interim, you've done a good job of avoiding this.

What did you do instead? You let God set the pace. That's been hard over 2 ½ years of waiting, but you did it! As well, you kept the congregational conversation on what God wants/where God wants the congregation to serve and how. Because of our human nature, that will be tested again during this next transition from interim to permanent pastor. Your new pastor will know how to guide you in this time, with gifts wonderfully unique to that person, not a pale imitation of any other leader.

Begin by remembering that your new pastor is "called" in the same way the four listed above were. They were imperfect human beings that *God chose* to be obedient and to use their gifts on God's behalf. In this, God is in control; not them, not others around them, not you.

Also, faithful pastors work with others who are aware of their callings. They (that's you!) see their gifts as fitting into God's plan and forward movement of salvation. They are hopeful. They forgive themselves and others. They keep eyes and hearts focused on power, patience, love, understanding, and the other gifts each of us is given for our calling – by God – in our baptism.

Who knows? Someday some pastor will write a "Calling Quiz" with *you* as one of the answers. I would do that myself, but for me there is no mystery about your calling. You are faithful. You are humble. You are part of a community filled with grace and hope. Keep this calling. It speaks of Jesus and his saving presence. I know it speaks that to me.

Pastor Dow

Christmas Gratitude

My family and I would like to thank each and every member of Spirit of Life Lutheran Church for your kind wishes, cards, and gifts. They helped to make this Christmas season holy and memorable. I hope that the newborn Jesus came to you in the same loving ways!

Pastor Dow



Dear Spirit of Life Church
Congregation,

Thank you for your generous Christmas
gift; it was very thoughtful and
appreciated.

Vonda

Annual Congregational Meeting

Please note that on Sunday, January 27, 2019 there will be one service at 10 AM. Our annual meeting will follow this service.

The agenda will include:

- **Approval of 2018 annual meeting minutes**
- **Approval of 2018 Ministry reports**
- **Approval of 2019 Budget**
- **Vote on Pastoral candidate,**
- **Updates on signage, website**
- **Leadership Team elections**

Please plan to attend.

Leadership Team Ballot 2019

The current Leadership Team Member terms expire 12-31-2019 and are: Al Speicher – President, Dan Nichols – Vice President, Brian Vance -Treasurer, Edith Brisson – Secretary, Steve Carlson (Food Pantry), Anita Vance Youth/Education. Debby Speicher (Property), Dee Crawley (Property), Maggie Spruill (Outreach), JoAnn Strynick (Fellowship), Bonnie and Dave Messick (E Communication)

_____ ***Tom Gambitsky (Worship)**

*Was appointed by the Leadership team to fill vacancy – need to be officially elected during Annual Meeting

Per church constitution: Officers of the Congregation (executive positions) President & Vice-President will be voted by the Leadership Team

Education / Youth

Leadership Team Member: Anita Vance – anitalvance@gmail.com 814-932-0203

December attendance at Sunday School has had some increases, and we are pleased to see so many sweet faces around our table. We have talked about the Christmas story, the journey to Bethlehem, the Wonder of the Gift of God's Son. Our favorite puppet, Buddy, learned how to listen for God's voice in a whisper, and played Journey to Bethlehem, reviewing the Gospel and sequence of events as we traveled the game board. We completed several ornament crafts and sticker scenes. The search for the perfect VBS program has begun! Watch for details!

Financial Corner

Leadership Team Member: Brian Vance - bavance54@gmail.com

Attendance

	9 am	10:30 am	Nursery/Sunday School
12/2/18	41	31	12
12/9/18	29	21	4
12/16/18	68	24	9
Christmas Eve (one service)		95	

Advent Services

11/28	9
12/5	13
12/12	12
12/19	11

FINANCIAL CORNER	DEC 18
Envelope Offering	\$ 12,249.67
Love offering	\$ 300.00
Church bldg usage (supv of elections \$200, Liberty Apostolic Church \$400)	\$ 600
12/30 offerings	\$
Interest Income (12/31)	\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 12,249.67
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 10,772.74
Food Pantry Income	\$ 7.00
Food Pantry Balance	\$ 3,964.36

Fellowship and Outreach Teams

We have been doing very well. The week of December 11 and 12 we served 192 families.

December 18 and 19 we served 203 families which tied a record for number of families in one week.

We were closed December 25 and 26 and will open on January 2 and 3. God has provided for us the entire year and has made sure we always had enough. We are truly thankful for all we have accomplished. Thank you for your support.

Outreach

Now that the Holidays have past, we need to focus on what we will do in 2019. Spring Fling was missed by many this past year so let's start now and pick a date. Easter is April 21, 2019. I am asking that everyone check your calendars and the school calendars and decide if April 6th or 13th works for the majority.

This means potluck and egg stuffing would take place on Sunday March 31 or April 7th. Let's make it a success. Thanks.

We are planning some events as we go into 2019 so watch for posting and announcements. I want to thank everyone who helped me this past year couldn't have done it without you. Do you have any ideas for this next year please let me know... this group is for the entire congregation and all are invited. Thank you again and let's make this next year a time of fellowship and community.

Yours in Christ
JoAnn

Now that the Holidays have past, we need to focus on what we will do in 2019. Spring Fling was missed by many this past year so let's start now and pick a date. Easter is April 21, 2019. I am asking that everyone check your calendars and the school calendars and decide if April 6th or 13th works for the majority.

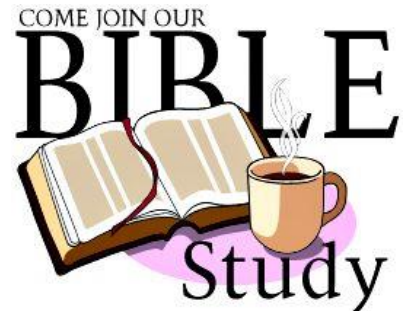
This means potluck and egg stuffing would take place on Sunday March 31 or April 7th. Let's make it a success. Thanks.

Bible Studies

Gary Strysick - jstrysick@yahoo.com

*"For where two or three are gathered in my name,
I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20)*

We now have *two* Bible Study offerings at Spirit of Life – Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am with Gary Strysick and Sunday mornings at 8:00 am with Pastor Dow.



Emergency Food Pantry

Steve Carlson - steveandcasey@yahoo.com (904)654-6462

Matthew 25:35. "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me"

Wow, what a year 2018 was! Our customer count was up over 20% and our Food Ministries continue to grow and thrive.

Here are your end of year numbers:

Number of Households	7,814
Total Individuals in Households	22,966
# Seniors 60+	6,863
# Children under 18	6,120
# of Disabled	4,691
# Veterans	1,388

In addition, we are now receiving food donations from many local restaurants, including Little Caesars Pizza, Outback, Red Lobster, Starbucks etc.

Thank you to everyone who helps pick this food up so that we can get it to the people who need it!

Thank you for allowing us to continue this important ministry.

Yours in Christ,
Steve

Worship and Music

Leadership Team Member: Dan Nichols – nichdc@comcast.net

Hello,

It's been great being Worship team lead for the past 3 years, but this will be my last newsletter entry as Tom Gambitsky will be taking over this role. If you have heard his sermons during the times when Pastor Dow has been out, then you know he is a very energetic and entertaining person as well as being extremely knowledgeable about all things biblical. He has also done communion for the shut ins and sick of our church among other great things. I really am thankful to have him on and am certain he will do a much better job that I ever did!

I will still be doing all the normal odds and ends I have been doing, just now someone who knows how to drive is in the driver's seat. I think Tom even has a license. There are a lot of irons in the fire for 2019 including a new Pastor, possibly a new sign, possibly a new space for the food pantry, new ways of doing business etc... so this is a very exciting time; so, make sure to have all your input known if you have any in any!

Take care and Happy New Year,
Daniel

Ruth Circle

Women of the ELCA (WELCA)
Dawn Martin (904)518-6903

Thankofferings

Thankofferings are a long-standing custom among Lutheran women. We give in thanksgiving for blessings received—and we do receive so many blessings, don't we? And we are so grateful. That's why we give Thankofferings. Offering jars area available in the Narthex, please don't forget to turn them in by the end of January. If you'd like to donate online, please use the square reader which is in the Sanctuary and advise Edith that you have designated a donation to go to WELCA.

Grandma Ruth's Bake Sale & Meeting

Our Grandma Ruth's bake sale was very successful, and we'd like to thank all who participated. Our next meeting will be held at the church, January 4th at 10 a.m. – All are welcome.

Thank you,
Dawn Martin

Call to Care (Prayer List)

Our Shut in: Robin Blackburn

Our Loved Ones: Mary Brewer (Carl's mother), Amber Bass Barnes (Mary Elwood's cousin), Larry Fortune, Jack Adams, Ted St Martin

Our Military members: Jeff & Trey

Chronic Prayers: Kristina Aldred, Ron Barnes (Ronnie's father & Kathy Barnes FIL), Randy Barron (Pat Barron's grandson), William Carprio (Heather Austin's son), Jackie Corderio (Maggie Spruill sister), Brenda Donaldson, Rusty Elwood (Mary's husband), Shirley Fields, Dan Fisher (Michele Hoyle father, Bob's F-I-L), Ed Graham (Debby Speicher uncle), Iliana, Linda, Gromling (Jean DeSwarte sister), Mary Hall, Linda Hill, Kevin Hubbard, Alan, Larry and Terri Joiner, Barbara Kirkwood, Tammy Machlouf, Kelly Matthews, Tracey McGammon, Mildred Moody, John Murray (food pantry client), Sue Patterson, Tommy Payne (Carol Payne husband), Andrianne Ramey, Paul Ruen, and Mary Ellen Sanders (Brenda Murray Mom, Hood family grandmother & great), Betty Smith, and Mildred Taylor. Robin Hadden (Bob Masculine's daughter).

<u>BIRTHDAYS</u>		
5	Kelly Kirk	<i>Happy Anniversary</i>
6	David Kirk	
6	Michele Rademacher	
10	Charlie Berry	
12	Dale McLarty	
12	Antrone Jones	
13	Fred Heinrich	
16	Michele Hoyle	
17	Paul Spellman	
17	Chris Duke	
18	Derek Ochoa	
21	Lucas Ochoa	
		3 Stephen & Ashley Barnes

24	Kyle Barone	
25	Pat McLarty	
26	Kassandra DeLaRosa	
26	Kara Wenk	
27	David Messick	
29	Chad Gullett	

JANUARY 2019

Event	Date	Time
<u>Praise Band Rehearsal</u>	Thursday, January 03, 2019	6:30 PM
<u>Ruth Circle</u>	Friday, January 04, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Sunday, January 06, 2019	8:00 AM
<u>Contemporary Service</u>	Sunday, January 06, 2019	9:00 AM
<u>Traditional Service</u>	Sunday, January 06, 2019	10:30 AM
<u>Confirmation Class</u>	Sunday, January 06, 2019	11:30 AM
<u>Liberty Apostolic Church Service</u>	Sunday, January 06, 2019	2:00 PM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Tuesday, January 08, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Wednesday, January 09, 2019	9:30 AM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Wednesday, January 09, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Praise Band Rehearsal</u>	Thursday, January 10, 2019	6:30 PM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Sunday, January 13, 2019	8:00 AM
<u>Contemporary Service</u>	Sunday, January 13, 2019	9:00 AM
<u>Traditional Service</u>	Sunday, January 13, 2019	10:30 AM
<u>Confirmation Class</u>	Sunday, January 13, 2019	11:30 AM
<u>Liberty Apostolic Church Service</u>	Sunday, January 13, 2019	2:00 PM
<u>Leadership Team Meeting</u>	Monday, January 14, 2019	6:00 pm
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Tuesday, January 15, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Wednesday, January 16, 2019	9:30 AM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Wednesday, January 16, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Meet & Greet Prospective Pastor</u>	Thursday, January 17, 2019	1 to 7 pm
<u>Praise Band Rehearsal</u>	Thursday, January 17, 2019	6:30 PM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Sunday, January 20, 2019	8:00 AM
<u>Contemporary Service</u>	Sunday, January 20, 2019	9:00 AM
<u>Traditional Service</u>	Sunday, January 20, 2019	10:30 AM
<u>Confirmation Class</u>	Sunday, January 20, 2019	11:30 AM
<u>Liberty Apostolic Church Service</u>	Sunday, January 20, 2019	2:00 PM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Tuesday, January 22, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Wednesday, January 23, 2019	9:30 AM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Wednesday, January 23, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Praise Band Rehearsal</u>	Thursday, January 24, 2019	6:30 PM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Sunday, January 27, 2019	8:00 AM
<u>Combined Service</u>	Sunday, January 27, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Annual Congregational Meeting/Vote on Pastor</u>	Sunday, January 27, 2019	11:00 AM
<u>Liberty Apostolic Church Service</u>	Sunday, January 27, 2019	2:00 PM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Tuesday, January 29, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Bible Study</u>	Wednesday, January 30, 2019	9:30 AM
<u>Food Pantry</u>	Wednesday, January 30, 2019	10:00 AM
<u>Praise Band Rehearsal</u>	Thursday, January 31, 2019	6:30 PM

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Community, Faith and Service

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Lutheran Church**

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Community, Faith and Service



www.SpiritofLifeJacksonville.org

**This is Christ's Church.
There is a place for you here.
We are the church that shares a
living, daring confidence in God's grace.
Liberated by our faith, we embrace
you as a whole person—
questions, complexities and all.
Join us as we do God's work in Christ's
name for the life of the World!**